

'1 man, 1 horse, 2700 miles and 30 cathedrals' was the intriguing title for the presentation at our February meeting. Despite the chilly evening it was enough to tempt out a large number of our membership, and, as it turned out, we were not disappointed.

In 2006, William Reddaway decided that he wanted to do something to raise funds for his two favourite charities: the Wormwood Scrubs Pony Centre, a Riding for the Disabled branch, and The Family Holiday Charity, which helps families with days [and weeks] out.

The planning took seven years and a lot of maps to create a trip on horseback in 2013 around England – with a very brief foray across Hadrian's Wall – to visit 30 cathedrals starting and finishing at Gloucester.

His companion in the venture, Strider, was, for the most part, a steady ride, although he balked at Sheffield's trams and wasn't happy with wheelie bins. When he developed saddle sores part way through the journey, Mr Reddaway was forced to lead him, often as much as 30 miles in a day, until they healed.

At each Cathedral they were welcomed [and Strider blessed] by a member of the clergy and often welcomed into the nave. When they completed the journey, which took them from early May to December, he decided to take one last trip to Tewkesbury Abbey, where, not to be outdone by 30 cathedrals, they were invited into the Abbey and Strider received another blessing.

To date, William and Strider have raised just under £100k, for the two charities.

And we have more activities planned. The Garden Group is looking forward to visiting Cotswold Farms at Duntisbourne Abbots to see snowdrops in February and plan to see Hellebores in March near Bath.

The Book Group is currently reading 'Still Life' by Sarah Winman and have chosen 'Paternoster' by Kim Fleet as their next 'good read'. The Gloucester Federation of WIs had already arranged a 'Tea with Kim Fleet', so readers will have a chance to put questions to this local author.

The Craft Group have had two meetings recently : one to explore Diamond painting, which provided some dazzling results, and the second to try the Japanese craft of Sashiko.

We are exploring the opportunity to meet for Sunday lunch occasionally, which we hope will appeal to those members who rarely do a 'roast' and the first is being planned for the end of March in Tetbury. If the initiative proves popular, we may well venture further afield.

The next monthly coffee morning at The Snooty Fox is on Monday 25 March at 10.30am.

Our March meeting at The Goods Shed is on Monday 11 March at 7.30pm, when we are looking forward to a talk from Sally Gillespie of Gloucestershire Young Carers. We welcome members from Tetbury and surrounding villages, we would love to meet you.

Rowena Palsler, Tetbury WI

www.tetbury-wi.org.uk

